

October 27, 2003

Michael Powell, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW, Room
Washington, DC 20554

In the matter of: Nomination for Universal Service Administrative Company Board of Directors,

FCC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45.

Dear Mr. Powell:

We would like to nominate Dr. Douglas D. Christensen, Nebraska Commissioner of Education, to serve a term on the Universal Service Administrative Company Board of Directors representing schools that are eligible to receive support from the Universal Service program.

Dr. Christensen was appointed Commissioner by the Nebraska State Board of Education in 1994. For the last nine years, he has guided the state's school systems through their technology planning and infrastructure development. Under his leadership and through the work of the Educational Technology Consortium, the state department of education has:

- Assisted schools and Educational Service Units (ESUs) in applying for and receiving \$18 million dollars in line cost savings from local carriers through the Universal Services Fund, E-Rate.
- Completed construction of distance learning facilities in the Technology Center that provide two way interactive video/audio communication among 100 sites in eastern Nebraska. The system will have potential to connect with at least 230 other two way sites located statewide. It will be used for consultation, conferencing, and staff development among NDE staff and schools and ESUs.
- Completed certification and re-certification of 440 school district technology plans. Plans now reside in an electronic database that easily and rapidly provides access to technology trends, equipment, goals and objectives of schools reporting and provides summary reporting and projections.
- Completed construction of a link to the Nebraska Video Conferencing Network that provides two-way interactive video/audio communications to 27 state government locations statewide. Intended use is to provide a vehicle for consultation, conferencing and staff development.
- Formed a Native American Advisory Council in order to engage the schools and communities, statewide, that are serving native students. As a result, there is an annual summit on native education issues and much progress has been made in addressing issues of dropouts, drug and alcohol addiction, student achievement and graduation rates. Through our challenge grants and career education grants we have encouraged the utilization of technology in our reservation schools to connect students to outside resources, to develop technological literacy and develop marketable skills in technology.

- Met regularly with an advisory council representative of the private schools of the state that are accredited. The council discusses issues of how private schools can meet the requirements of the state and yet maintain their unique role and mission.
- Conducted an annual statewide K-12 distance learning survey and summarized and published the results. The survey dealt with current utilization of the distance-learning infrastructure.
- Actively worked with Nebraska Information Technology Commission Education Council and ESUs to establish a statewide backbone in place and in expanding the bandwidth of the existing infrastructure.
- Worked with cable companies, TeleCos, Nebraska Educational Telecommunications and ESUs to provide gateways for better inter-pod communications.
- Researched and developed prototype streaming video system for the electronic dissemination of resources and presentations.

As Nebraska looks to the future of education technology, the state will be guided by the recently-completed State School Improvement/Technology Plan. In developing the plan, Dr. Christensen worked with representatives from Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) (teachers and administrators), regional service agencies, higher education, state school board association, state teachers association, state council of school administrators, and representatives of the private sector. The state is working to establish and implement a technology based data and information system that correlates with, facilitates and enhances Nebraska School Improvement and increased student performance. The state also seeks to facilitate and enhance teaching and student learning with the use of technology and align it with the Nebraska School Improvement Plan. Finally, Dr. Christensen has tasked the state with monitoring student proficiency to provide evidence that shows increases in student achievement and school improvement through the use of technology. For a complete copy of the state's strategic plan, please see attached.

In addition to his role as Superintendent of Schools in Nebraska, Dr. Christensen currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Council of Chief State School Officers. In his capacity as a board member for the Council, he represents 49 of the state education leaders, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions.

We believe that the USAC Board of Directors will be well served by Dr. Christensen's breadth of knowledge and experience in the fields of education and educational technology. We urge the commission to appoint Dr. Christensen to the USAC Board.

Sincerely,

Dr. G. Thomas Houlihan, Executive Director
Council of Chief State School Officers

Pamela Grotz, Executive Director
National Parent Teacher Association

Nancy Keenan, Education Policy Director
People for the American Way

Dr. Bill East

National Association of State Directors of
Special Education

Brenda L. Welburn, Executive Director
National Association of State Boards of
Education

Dr. Jerry Sellentin, Executive Director
Nebraska Council of School Administrators

Dr. John Bonaiuto, Executive Director

Nebraska Association of School Boards

VITA
DOUGLAS D. CHRISTENSEN

Education	Ph.D., University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1978
Current Position	Commissioner of Education, Nebraska Department of Education, December 28, 1994 - present
Recent Experience	<p>Deputy Commissioner of Education, Nebraska Department of Education, November 1, 1992 - December 27, 1994</p> <p>Associate Commissioner of Education, Nebraska Department of Education, July 1, 1990 - October 31, 1992</p> <p>Superintendent, North Platte Public Schools, North Platte, Nebraska, 1985-1990</p> <p>Superintendent, Colby Public Schools, Unified School District #315, Colby, Kansas, 1978-1985</p> <p>Bloomfield Public Schools, Bloomfield, Nebraska, 1974-1976</p> <p>University Teaching and Administration, Department of Secondary Education, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1976-1978</p>
Publications/Featured Articles	<p><i>Accountability-Based Curriculum Development</i>, published by the Jones Institute, Emporia, Kansas, May 1989</p> <p><i>Effective Schools and School Climate: A Synthesis of Research for Classroom Teachers and School Administrators</i>, Education Systems Associates, Inc., 1992</p> <p><i>Accountability or School Improvement?</i> <u>NCSA Today</u>, November 1999.</p> <p><i>Administration is the Foundation for Leadership: Vision Makes It Happen.</i> Nebraska Council of School Administrators, March, 2000</p> <p><i>Standards, Assessment and Accountability: Partnerships Will Make It Happen</i>, ESU Annual Conference, April, 2000</p> <p><i>Political and Policy Issues Related to Large Scale Assessment</i>, CCSSO Conference, June, 2000</p> <p><i>When There Are No Easy Answers</i>, <u>NCSA Today</u>, November 2000</p> <p><i>All The Children . . .</i>, <u>NCSA Today</u>, May/June 2001</p> <p><i>On the Right Track</i>, June, 2001 (alternatives to summative assessment)</p>
Publications (continued)	<p><i>Building State Assessment From the Classroom Up</i>, <u>The School Administrator</u>, December, 2001</p>

One Correct Answer, Governing, May 2002. Article by Alan Greenblatt

Up Close and Personal, Education Week, May 22, 2002. Article by Lynn Olson

Time to Rethink the High School Experience, NCSA Today, October, 2003

***Consultant/
Presenter/
Service***

Curriculum Development and Instructional Leadership
Administrator Appraisal
Visionary Leadership: Essential Conditions for Change
High Performance Learning: Model for Redesigning Education for Nebraska Students
Standards, Assessment and Accountability
Formative Assessment and School Improvement
Native American Education Advisory Council (2000 to present)
Member, National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education State Partnership Board (2002)
Member, State of Nebraska Worker Training Board (2002)
Member, Governor's Council on Health Promotion and Physical Fitness (2002)
AIM Institute, Board of Directors (2003)
AASA Leadership Conference (May 2003)
Keynote Speaker, Arizona Superintendents Association Conference, October, 2003

Recognitions

Kansas Administrator of the Year, 1982
Nebraska Superintendent of the Year, 1990
Spirit of PTA Award, Nebraska PTA, 1997
Walter G. Turner Award, American Association Educational Service Units, 1997
David W. Hutchinson Award, UN-L, 1998
Cornerstone Award, Nebraska Chapter of FFA, 1999
Burnham Yates Award, Nebraska Council on Economic Education, 1999
Nebraska FBLA Honorary Life Membership Award, 2001
Cornhusker Boys' State Corporation Board of Directors, 2002
UNL Teachers College Alumni Association Award of Excellence, 2002
2003 Alvah Kilgore Award, Nebraska Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
NCTE/SLATE Affiliate Intellectual Freedom Award, November 2003
Public Official of the Year, Governing Magazine, November, 2003